

Annual Report 2005 - 2006  
The Roadside Conservation Committee



**Terms of Reference**

*To coordinate and promote the conservation and effective management of native vegetation on road and rail reserves for the benefit of the environment and the people of Western Australia*

**Mode of Operation**

The care, control and management of most public road reserves in this State are vested in a local government authority under the Local Government Act or the Main Roads Western Australia under the Main Roads Act. The Roadside Conservation Committee (RCC) has no powers to regulate for, or enforce, the protection of roadside vegetation.

The RCC's approach to its task is set by the words "*To coordinate and promote*" in its terms of reference. This is entirely based on cooperation, liaison and the voluntary acceptance, by all who work in the roadside environment, of management practices to maintain a safe and efficient road system, while concurrently ensuring the sustainability of the many values present within the roadside.

Three interrelated means are used to pursue this aim:

(i) Promotion in various ways, including providing useable information, such as brochures policies, manuals and guidelines, of and about the multiple values of remnant vegetation along road and rail reserves.

(ii) Funding and encouraging research on issues relevant to the management of linear reserves, particularly to clarify their various values, and to seek innovative methods for managing them so as to ensure the sustenance of remnant vegetation within transport corridors.

(iii) Collating and providing information and advice on the management of cultural and natural resources present within road and rail reserves.

**RCC Membership, 30<sup>th</sup> June 2006**

Dr Ken Atkins (Chairman) Department of Conservation and Land Management	Vacant Western Australian Municipal Association
Dr Robert Howard Main Roads Western Australia	Mr Brian Moyle Western Australian Wildflower Society
Mr Peter Bothwell WestNet Rail	Mr G Beeston Agriculture Western Australia
Cr Vic Orchard Western Australian Municipal Association Korda Shire	Ms Jenny Abbot Fire & Emergency Services Authority
Cr Steve Vallance Western Australian Municipal Association Chittering Shire	Ms Kath Mathwin Greening Australia Western Australia
	Mr Craig Morgan Western Power

Mr Jeff Anderton  
Conservation Council

Ms Sarah McEvoy  
Department of Environment

Ms Duanne Salins  
AlintaGas

Ms Cressida Wilson  
Executive Officer

Vacant  
Telstra

Ms Christina Pailthorpe  
Technical Officer

### **Meetings**

During the past year the Roadside Conservation Committee continued to meet on a quarterly basis. These meetings have sometimes incorporated presentations from member organisations or outsiders on matters that are relevant to the Committee.

### **Finance**

The Department of Conservation and Land Management and Main Roads Western Australia each continue to pay 50% of the Executive Officer's salary. CALM also meets the cost of servicing the RCC, including the provision of office space, telephone, postage, secretarial support, insurance etc, as well as employing the Technical Officer. The RCC has no financial administration functions.

### **Roadside Surveys and Mapping of Conservation Values**

This project has been ongoing since 1987 and involves organising local community groups to survey the roadsides within their local area. Training and support is provided for the volunteer data collection. The mapping has remained part of the RCC's core business, and has continued to incorporate the occurrence of environmental weeds, which provides a useful overview of the individual species present as well as an overview of the extent of weed infestation. This data is also very useful for local government. CALM's Geographic Information Section of the Information Management Branch continues to process this data and produces the subsequent maps. As of the 30<sup>th</sup> June 2006, 46 Shires have been mapped. Three Shires are nearing completion, one of which is a re-survey. There is a great deal of interest for the next survey season.

### **Liaison and Public Relations**

The RCC has continued to liaise with state and local government and community groups, e.g. Greening Australia WA, Landcare groups, Main Roads WA, FESA and CALM on roadside conservation issues. Information regarding roadside conservation has been disseminated by a variety of mediums, e.g.

- Written material for print media, eg. Conservation News;
- Displays at country shows, e.g. Wagin Woolorama;
- Advice to external groups, e.g. Beverly Naturalist Club;
- Response to public complaints on roadside conservation matters and requests from public for information.

The "Handbook of Environmental Practice for Road Construction and Maintenance Works" was released through Main Roads and WALGA to all Main Roads Offices and to call Shire councils. The RCC distributed it to relevant NRM groups and professionals, conservation groups, and relevant government departments.

The RCC attended training given by Main Roads on vegetation management and a workshop for the Department of Environment's clearing assessment team from the Native Vegetation Protection Branch. These raised the awareness of the RCC and promoted good roadside management practices.

Main Roads has been granted a State-wide purpose permit for the clearing of native vegetation for the purpose of widening or realigning a road managed by Main Roads. This purpose permit requires consultation with the RCC. Shire purpose permits have prompted some interest in vegetation management plans.

#### **Student Project**

Ms Rebecca Hayes from Curtin University was taken on as a work experience student in January 2005 continued to work for the RCC 1½ days a week.

#### **Static Displays**

This year the RCC participated in Wagin Woolorama, in conjunction with Landcare, Land for Wildlife and Birds Australia's Carnaby's cockatoo recovery project and others. The group displayed in the Department of Agriculture's pavilion, which limited space. The Pavilion won Best Indoor display for 2006.